Tonari ni (Next to You)

By Basso

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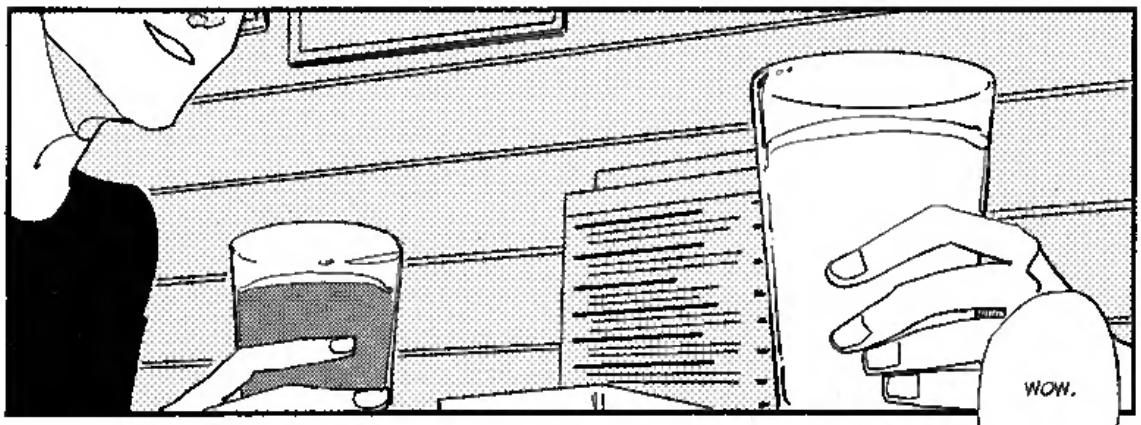
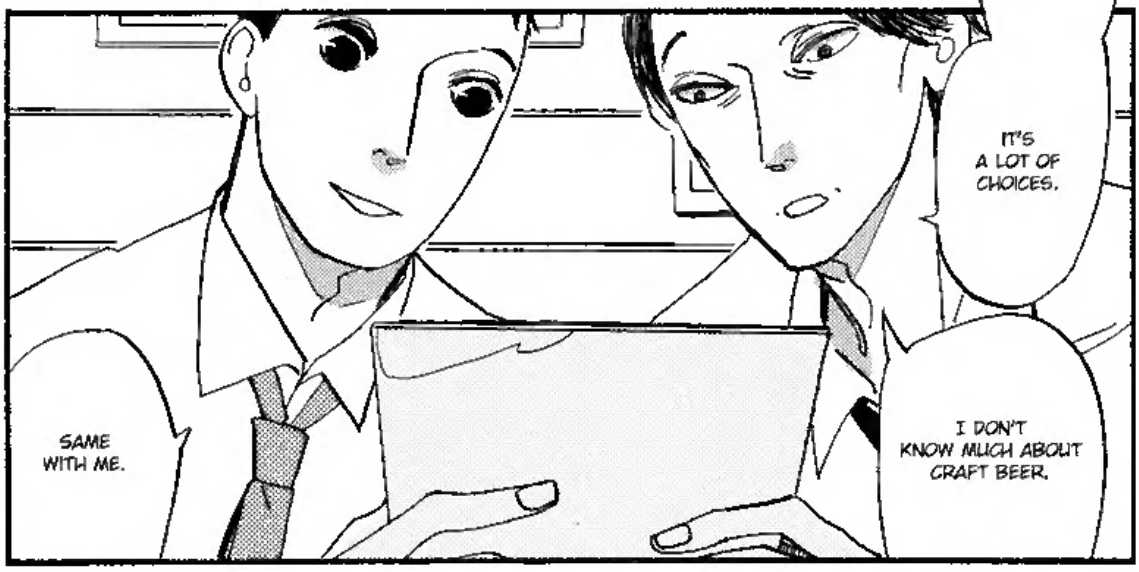
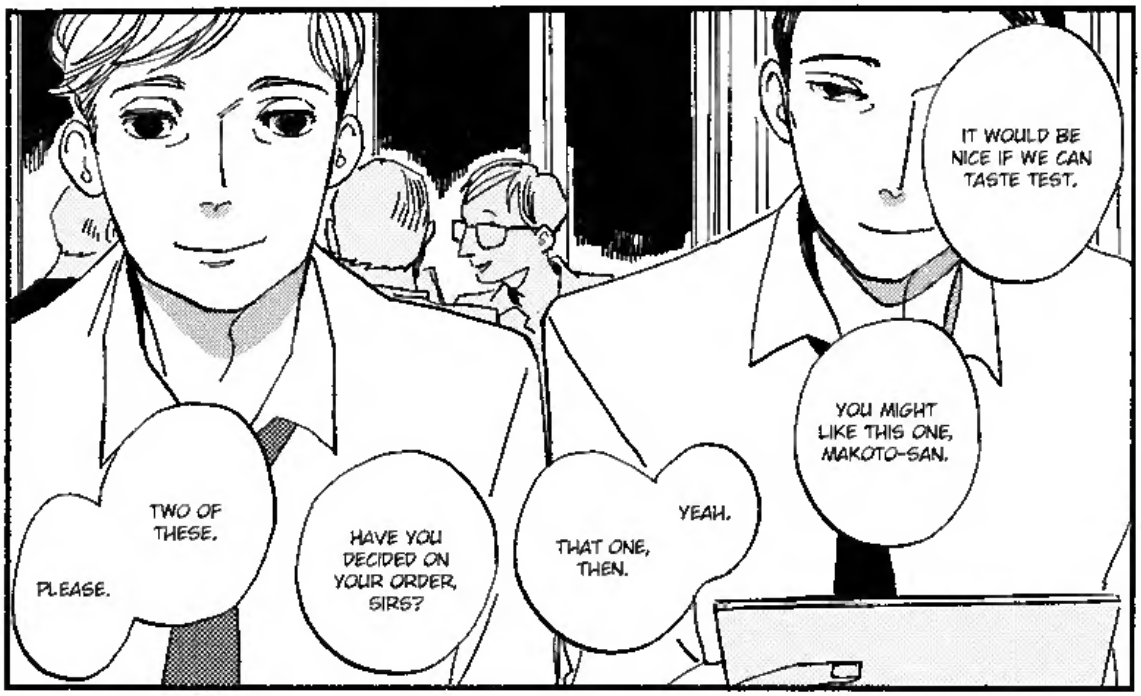
tonari ni


WOW.


IT'S A LOT OF CHOICES.
I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT CRAFT BEER.
SAME WITH ME.


IT WOULD BE NICE IF WE CAN TASTE TEST.
YOU MIGHT LIKE THIS ONE, MAKOTO-SAN.
YEAH.
THAT ONE, THEN.
HAVE YOU DECIDED ON YOUR ORDER, SIRS?
TWO OF THESE.
PLEASE.

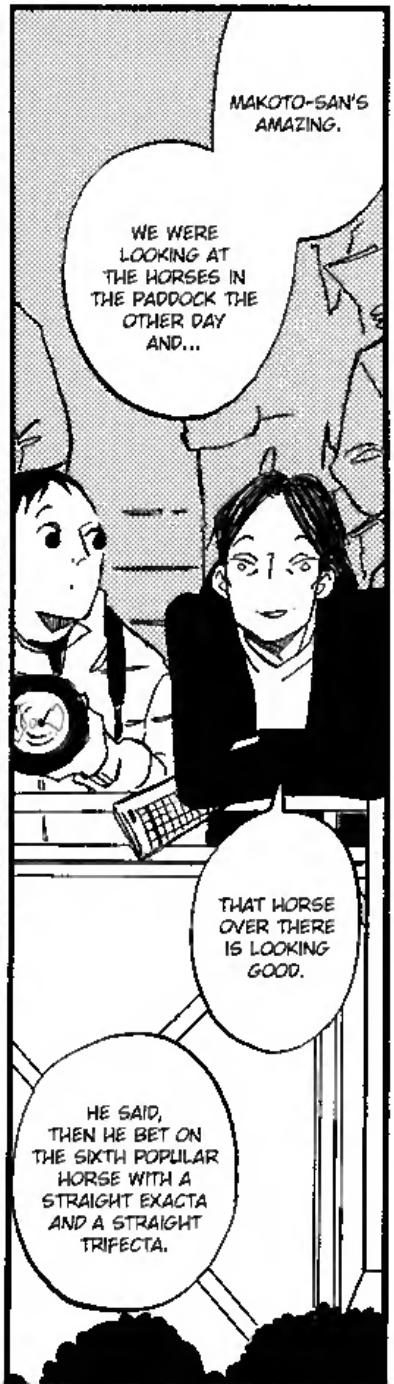
KINOSHITA-SAN.
'CAUSE WE FINALLY GOT TO MEET HIM.
YOU'RE BOTH SMILING.
WOW!
THEY'RE SOUVENIRS.
THANK YOU.
OH, RIGHT.
BEFORE I FORGET, HERE.
AND THE FOOD WAS SO GOOD!
IT WAS SUPER FUN.
TAIWAN.
HOW WAS IT?

WITH THE MONEY I WON FROM THE HORSES.
HAHA.
MAKOTO-SAN TOOK CARE OF MOST OF THE EXPENSES, THOUGH.....

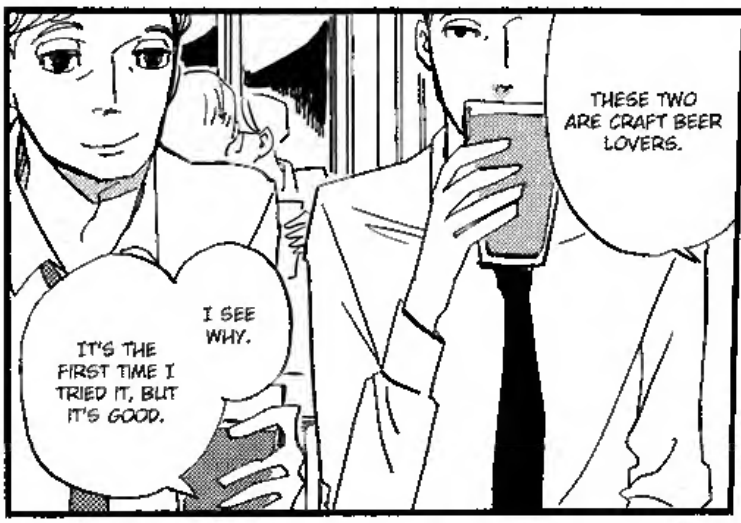
Eat and drink lots, everyone.
YOU'RE EVEN GOING TO THE RACECOURSE TOGETHER, HUH.
AND THAT'S WHY IT'S MY TREAT TODAY.

SOUNDS LOVELY.
I'VE HAD HIM GO TO THE RACECOURSE WITH ME EVERY WEEK.
LIKE AN AD FOR HORSE RACING.

I'VE DELEGATED MY KANSAI BUSINESS TRIPS TO MY STAFF.
I FINISHED THE HANDOVER.
SUNDAYS ARE NOW HOLIDAYS FOR ME.


MAKOTO-SAN'S AMAZING.
WE WERE LOOKING AT THE HORSES IN THE PADDOCK THE OTHER DAY AND...
THAT HORSE OVER THERE IS LOOKING GOOD.
HE SAID, THEN HE BET ON THE SIXTH POPULAR HORSE WITH A STRAIGHT EXACTA AND A STRAIGHT TRIFECTA.

Well then.
TO FIRST MEETINGS.
CHEERS!


THESE TWO ARE CRAFT BEER LOVERS.
I SEE WHY.
IT'S THE FIRST TIME I TRIED IT, BUT IT'S GOOD.

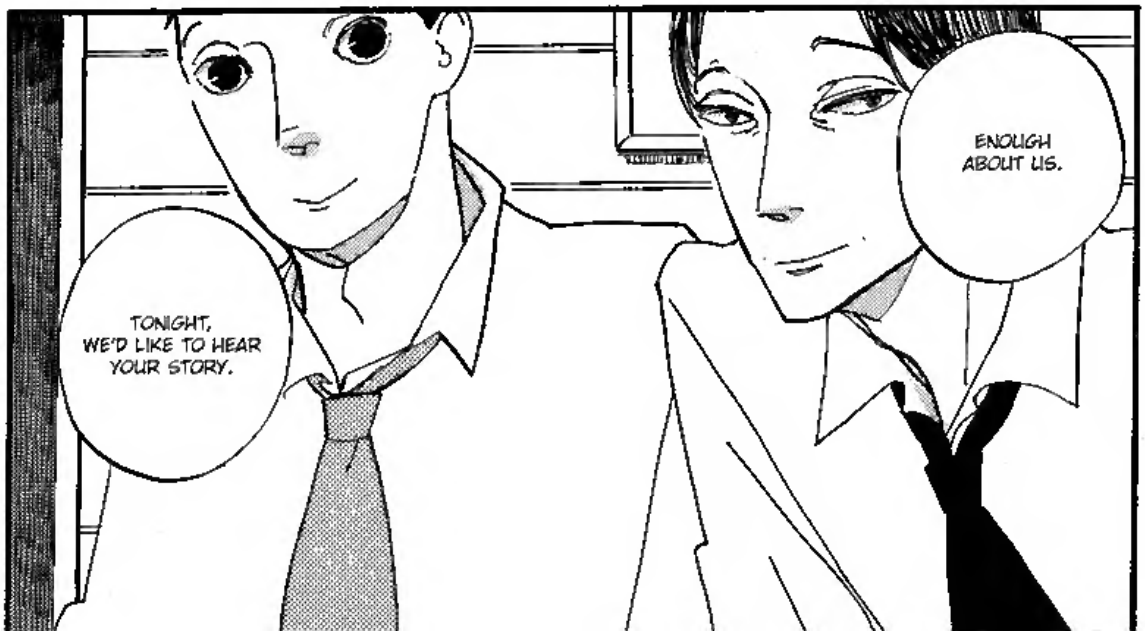
Oh
THIS IS GOOD.
RIGHT?

I USUALLY START MY SECOND DRINK WITH A HIGHBALL.
BUT IT'S GOING TO BE BAD IF I END UP ADDICTED TO THIS.
I'M GOING TO HAVE A BEER BELLY.
YOU SHOULD BE OKAY, KINOSHITA-SAN.
You're sort of thin.

HOW OLD ARE YOU, KINOSHITA-SAN?
I'M 45.
NOOO.
BELLIES ARE ANOTHER THING.
It'll completely balloon.
Old men...
IT'S TOUGH FOR OLD MEN LIKE ME.
THREE YEARS DIFFERENCE, THEN.
.....
WHAT?!
HMM?
YOU'RE 42?
NO WAY!
HE JUST DRESSES YOUNGER FOR HIS AGE.
squeeze

LET'S DISPENSE WITH THE "OLD MAN" FOR YOUR 40S.
YEAH.
SO, KINOSHITA-SAN,
I GUESS TSUCCHI CALLS ME "SEMPAI"
SINCE HE THINKS I'M IN MY MID-30S...
AND WE HAD THE SAME ALMA MATER.
AAHHH, SO...
Tsuchida-kun

ARE YOU BOTH IN YOUR 40S?
OH, NO. I'M IN MY 30S.
SO, YOU'VE ALSO GOT QUITE THE GAP IN AGE.

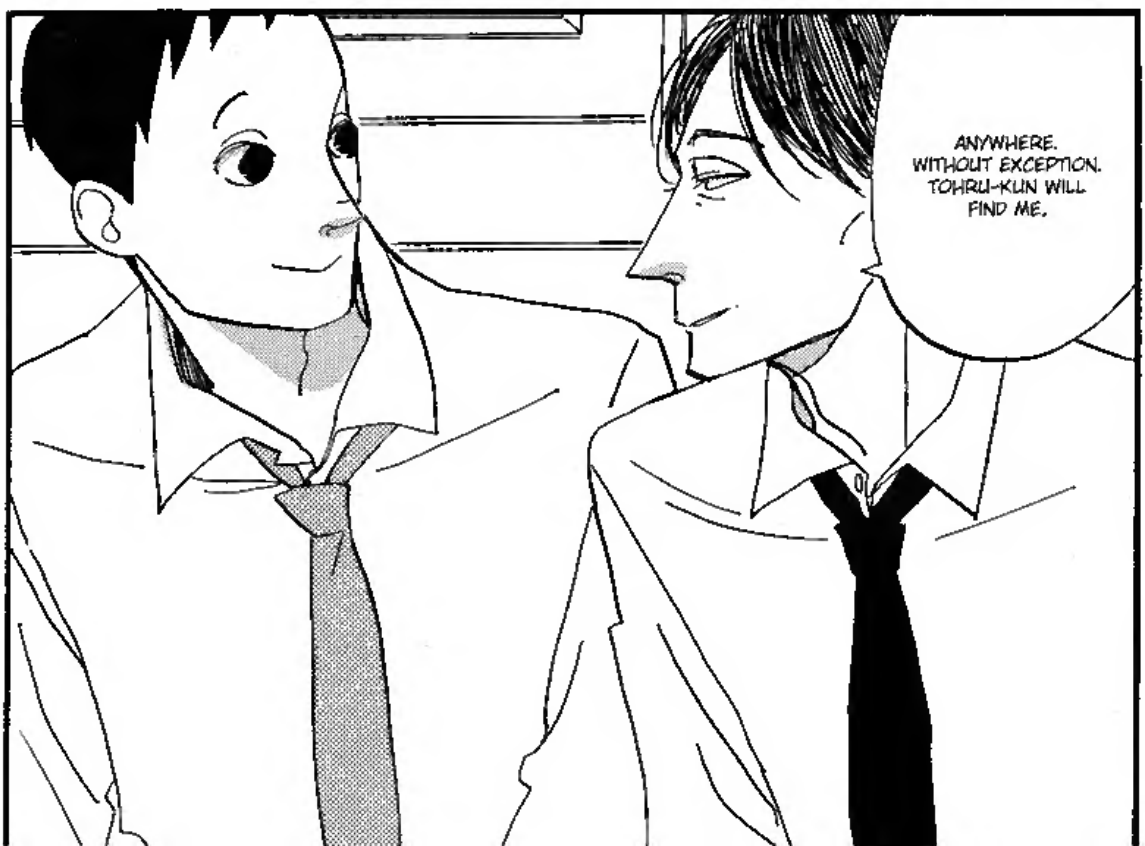

ENOUGH ABOUT US.
TONIGHT, WE'D LIKE TO HEAR YOUR STORY.

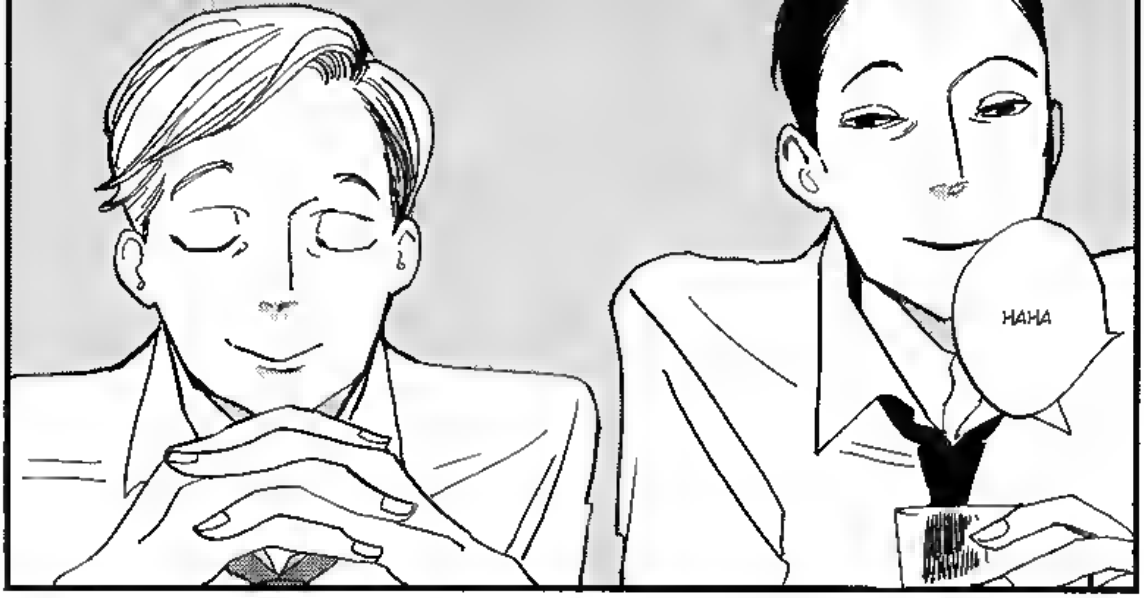
HEY, YOU'RE MOVING TOO FAST.....
KINOSHITA-SAN, WHAT PART DO YOU LOVE ABOUT HAYAMA-KUN?
WELL, I ALREADY KNOW HAYAMA-KUN LOVES KINOSHITA-SAN VERY MUCH.

YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY QUALMS ABOUT THE FACT THAT YOU'RE BOTH MEN?
I DON'T MIND.
I AM SO SORRY...
I WONDER IF IT WAS LIKE THAT.....

So cute...
SO, YOU ALSO LOVE HAYAMA-KUN VERY MUCH, DON'T YOU, KINOSHITA-SAN.
"WHAT PART" IS A HARD QUESTION.
IT'S ALL OF THEM. I GUESS.
YEAH.
YEAH, I GUESS SO.
HAHA
THIS OLD MAN IS NOT USED TO THIS KIND OF THING, SO HE'S GETTING EMBARRASSED.
BUT THE THING IS, TOHRU-KUN WAS ALWAYS ON MY MIND WHEN I COULDN'T MEET HIM.
IT COMPLETELY TURNED INTO A LOVE CONSULTATION WHEN THE LADIES AT THE SNACK BAR FIGURED IT OUT.

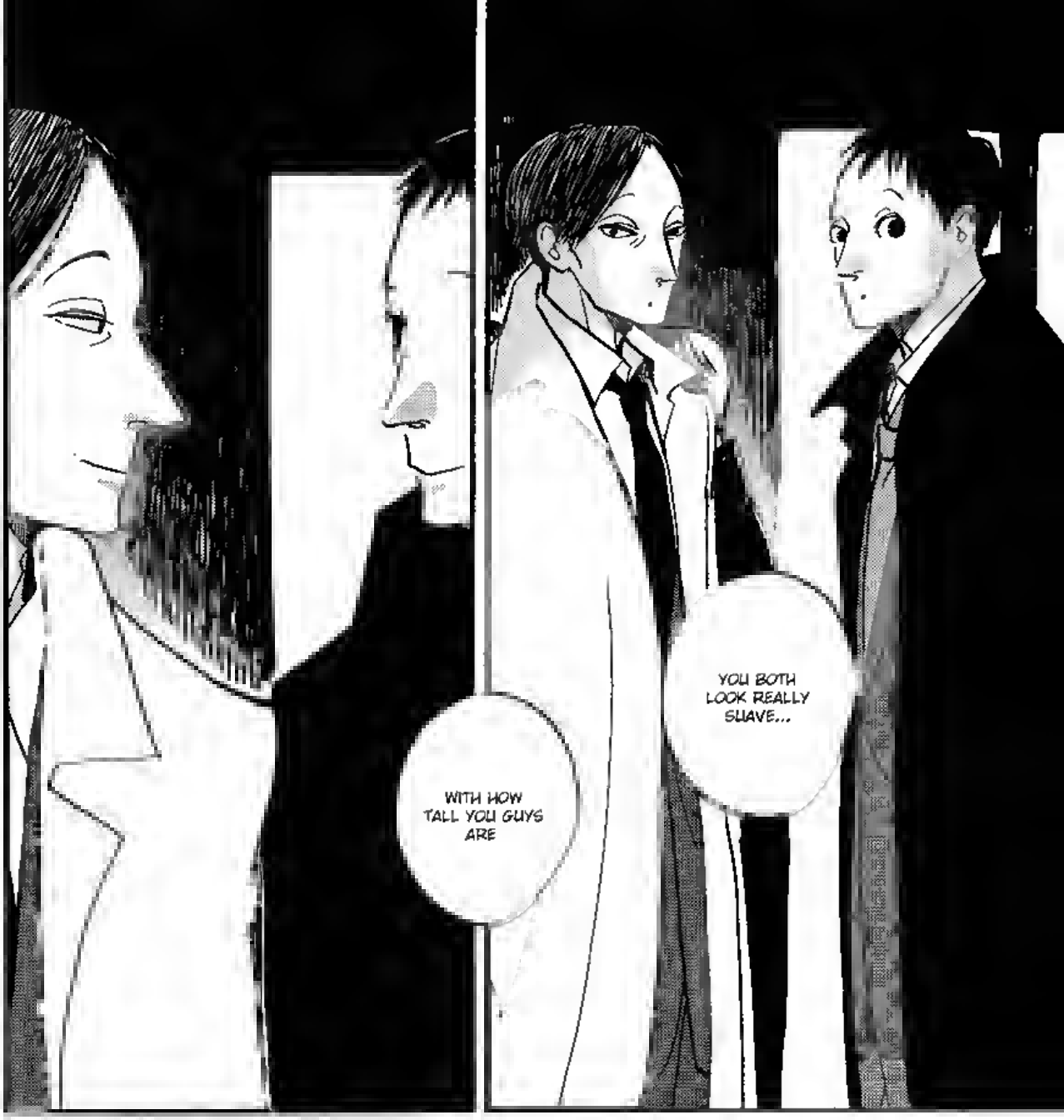
AND
MAY IT BE ON THE ROAD...
IN THE MIDDLE OF A CROWDED STATION...
AT THE RACECOURSE ...
MAYBE THAT THING WHERE HE CAN FIND ME.


ANYWHERE. WITHOUT EXCEPTION. TOHRU-KUN WILL FIND ME.


HAHA

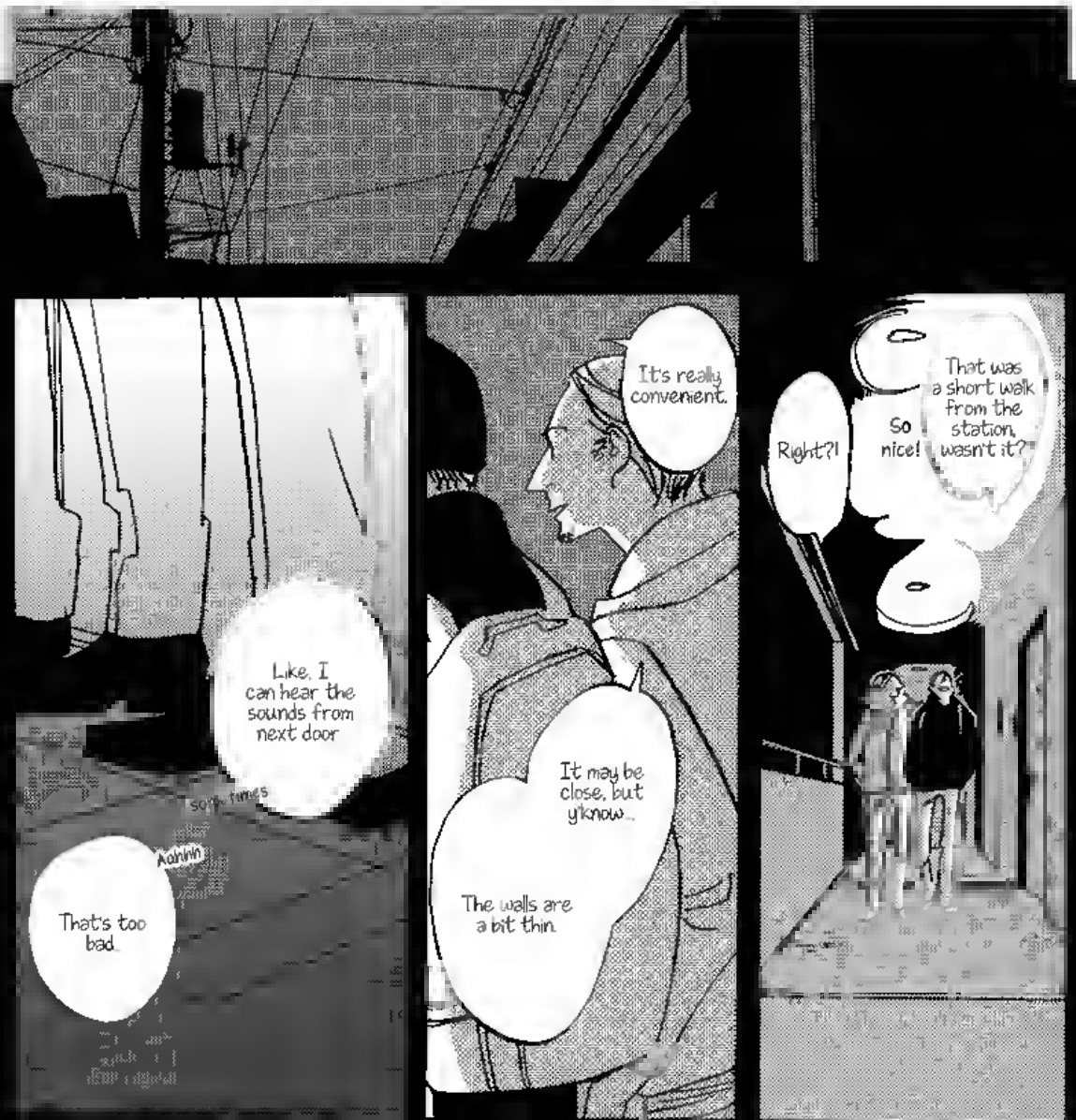
CHEERS TO YOU TWO.

NOW I KNOW WHY YOU CAN FIND HIM.
THANK YOU FOR TREATING US.
As always
IT'LL BE MY TREAT NEXT TIME WHEN I WIN A BET!


WITH HOW TALL YOU GUYS ARE
YOU BOTH LOOK REALLY SUAVE...

MY PLACE TODAY, MAKOTO-SAN?

SINCE IT'S CLOSE.
YEAH.
THAT SHOULD BE OKAY, I THINK.
I'M THINKING ABOUT MOVING, TOO.
NO,
THAT'S NOT IT.
...I SHOULD'VE PICKED A PLACE CLOSER TO YOU.....
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT.
SEE,
WHEN YOU CAME TO STAY AT MY PLACE...
THE SECOND TIME...
THAT TIME...


That was a short walk from the station, wasn't it?
So nice!
Right?!
It's really convenient.
It may be close, but y'know...
The walls are a bit thin.
Like, I can hear the sounds from next door
sometimes
Aahhh
That's too bad.

What?
That thing they just said...
Uh.....
CLACK CLACK
TCHK
.....
Ah.....
They probably can't hear us
It's okay if our voices...
Are about this loud.

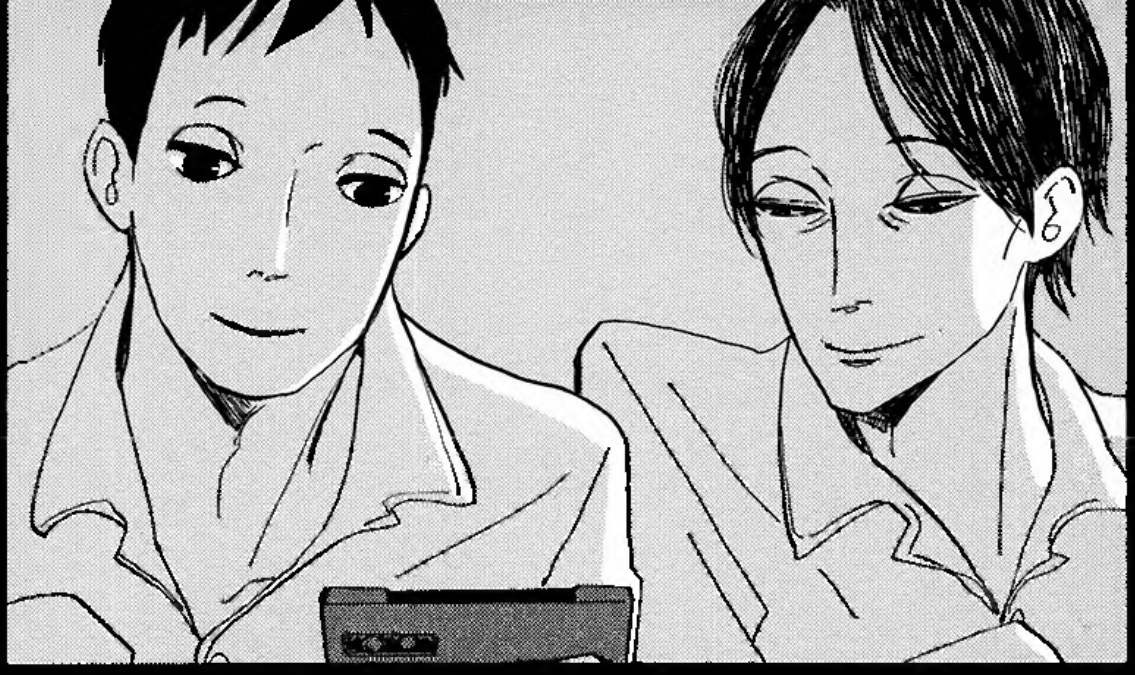
Um
I just wanted to put it into words one more time

Ahaha!
Shh!
Go ahead.
Haha
...Okay.

The toothbrushes.
I love you

But I couldn't do it
I've thought about cleaning it up once or twice
So, it was... Like this ever since, huh.
Yeah.
So, I left there...
Every time I look at it I'm confronted with myself

Your picture...
Me, too.
It's why I kept it behind the mirror.
But I couldn't do it.
I've thought of deleting it several times.



◆ Epilogue ／ End ◆

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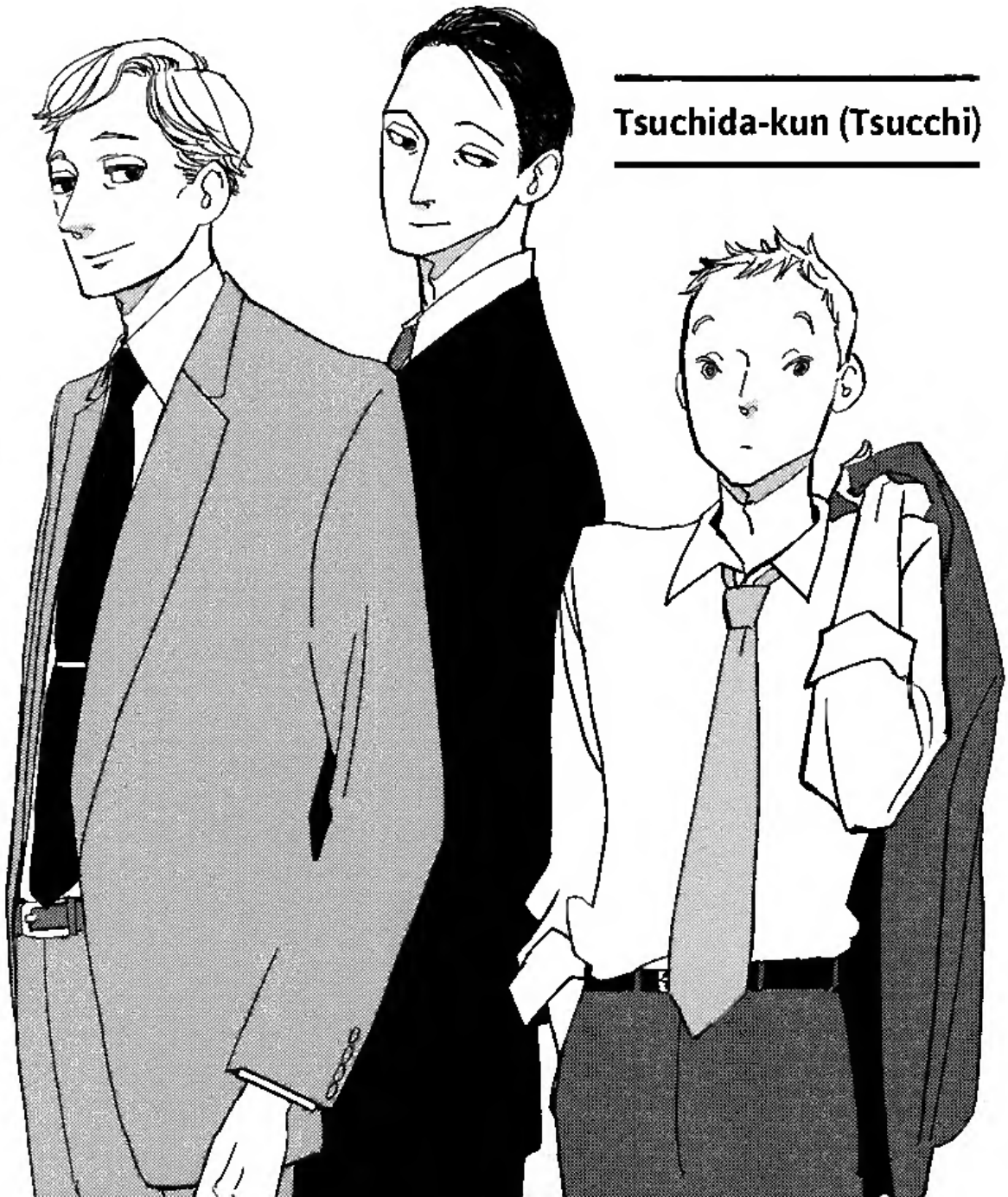
Makoto Kinoshita

Ryuuji Takino

Kazuma Seya

Tsuchida-kun (Tsucchi)